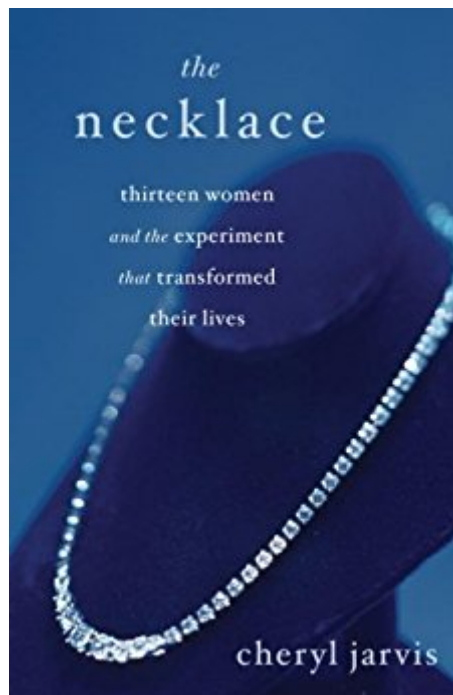




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The Necklace: Thirteen Women And The Experiment That Transformed Their Lives



Synopsis

The true story of thirteen women who took a risk on an expensive diamond necklace and, in the process, changed not only themselves but a community. Four years ago, in Ventura, California, Jonell McLain saw a diamond necklace in a local jewelry store display window. The necklace aroused desire first, then a provocative question: Why are personal luxuries so plentiful yet accessible to so few? What if we shared what we desired? Several weeks, dozens of phone calls, and a leap of faith later, Jonell bought the necklace with twelve other women, with the goal of sharing it. Part charm, part metaphor, part mirror, the necklace weaves in and out of each woman's life, reflecting her past, defining her present, making promises for her future. Lending sparkle in surprising and unexpected ways, the necklace comes to mean something dramatically different to each of the thirteen women. With vastly dissimilar histories and lives, the women show us how they transcended their individual personalities and politics to join together in an uncommon journey. What started as a quirky social experiment became something far richer and deeper, as the women transformed a symbol of exclusivity into a symbol of inclusiveness. They discovered that sharing the necklace among themselves was only the beginning; The more they shared with others, the more profound this experience—and experiment—became. Original, resonant, and beautifully told, this book is an inspiring story about a necklace that became greater than the sum of its links, and about thirteen ordinary women who understood the power of possibility, who touched the lives of a community, and who together created one extraordinary experience. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

The story told in *The Necklace* is both humbling and uplifting. After seeing a very expensive diamond necklace in the window of a local jewelery shop, Jonnell McLain convinces 12 other women to split the cost and share the ownership if it with her. What happens to the group of women and the community that surrounds them is as unexpected as it is interesting. The women are an unlikely bunch ranging from a shopaholic to a motorcycle riding, gun toting girl Friday, a farmer, and an interior designer. At first, the women have little in common other than the ownership of the necklace. Though from very different backgrounds and social classes, they begin to hold meetings once a month. The first meetings are designed to outline sharing guidelines and inconsequentialities such as the name for the necklace, but soon they become planning sessions for fund raisers and a place for the women to muster support for each other. When the community gets wind of the experiment, the diamonds take on a life of their own, and become not only a local conversation piece but a way for the women to share the glamour of the jewels with those who would never normally experience them. From barristas to homeless women, coworkers to brides, the diamonds become a symbol of sharing and goodwill from woman to woman, a sumptuous experience that reaches well beyond the original investors. As expected, sometimes tensions run high in the group and there are misunderstandings, but the women are able to see beyond those experiences and keep the experiment alive. Using the necklace, the women are able to champion social causes and aid many charities, including domestic violence centers, drug rehabilitation programs and specific assistance to the homeless.

The Necklace: thirteen women and the experiment that transformed their lives is the true story of a group of women that joined together to purchase and share a beautiful and expensive diamond necklace. For the most part they all realized it was about more than a necklace. It was about a group friendship, sharing experiences and helping one another. The necklace rotated from month to month between the women with exceptions for special events as well. This was not always an easy experience, the women went through arguments and disagreements about the necklace and how it

should be used in several cases. But the necklace really did bring these women together and in the process helped their community. I really enjoyed this book. I can't help compare it to the Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants book series in the fact that a group of women/girls share an object that brings them closer together. I also liked the idea that women that were almost polar opposites could come together and set aside differences to be part of the group. For the most part I like how the book worked, featuring one woman for each chapter, mini biographies of their lives and how they interacted with the group. I just wish each chapter was written more from each of their points of view more so than quotes sprinkled into a narration about them. I think it would have been more powerful if it all came right from their mouths. I do realize to link all the women together and keep the story moving there had to be a higher narration though. I really liked Priscilla Van Gundy, who only joined because her husband asked that the women allow her to join when they bought the necklace from him.

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